

AUTHENTIC PIECES

RESPECTING THE PROCEEDINGS IN BOTH

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,

AND IN THE

COUNTY MEETING AT YORK;

OR,

A PLAN FOR RESTRAINING THE

ENORMOUS POWER OF THE CROWN,

AND RETRENCHING THE

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

MDCCLXXX.

AUTHENTIC PIECES, &c.

I.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 7th December, 1779.

THE order of the day being read for the Lords to be summoned.

Moved, That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to beseech his Majesty to reflect on the manifold distresses and difficulties in which this kingdom is involved, too deeply felt to stand in need of enumeration.

To represent, that amidst the many and various matters which require reformation, and must undergo correction before this country can rise superior to its powerful enemies, the waste of public treasure requires instant remedy. That profusion is not vigour; and that it is become indispensibly necessary to adopt that true œconomy, which by reforming all useless expences, creates confidence in government, gives energy to its exertions, and provides means for that continuance.

Humbly to submit to his Majesty, that a considerable reduction of his Majesty's civil list would be an example well becoming his Majesty's paternal affection for his people, and his own dignity, could not fail of diffusing its influence through every department of the state, and would add true lustre to his Crown from the grateful feelings of a distressed people.

To assure his Majesty, that this House will readily concur in promoting so desirable a purpose, and that every one of its Members will cheerfully submit to such reduction of emolument in any office he may hold, as his Majesty in his royal wisdom may think proper to make.

Which being objected to, after long debate, the question was put thereupon; resolved in the negative.

Contents - - -	33	} 36	Not Contents - - -	57	} 77
Proxies - - -	3		Proxies - - -	20	

Names

Names of the Peers who voted in the Minority.

Dukes of	Effingham	Townshend
Devonshire	Egremont	Say and Sele
Bolton	Ferrers	Lords
Grafton	Fitzwilliam	Beaulieu
Manchester	Harcourt	Craven
Portland	Jersey	King
Richmond	Radnor	Paget
Marquis of	Spencer	Ponsonby
Rockingham	Derby	Ravenworth
Earls of	Shelburne	St. John
Abington	Viscounts	Bishops of
Cholmondeley	Hereford	St. Asaph
Coventry	Courtenay	Peterborough

HOUSE of LORDS.

Wednesday, 15th December, 1779.

The order of the day being read for the Lords to be summoned.

Moved to resolve, That the alarming addition annually making to the present enormous national debt, under the head of extraordinary incurred in the different services, requires immediate check and controul. The increasing the public expence beyond the grants of Parliament being at all times an invasion of the fundamental rights of Parliament, and the utmost œconomy being indispensibly necessary in the present reduced and deplorable state of the landed and mercantile interest of Great Britain and Ireland.

Which being objected to, after long debate, the question was put thereupon; resolved in the negative.

Contents	- - - }	41	Not Contents	- - - }	81
Proxies	- - - }		Proxies	- - - }	

Names of the Peers who voted in the Minority.

H. R. H. Duke of	Grafton	Earls of
Cumberland	Manchester	Abington
Rutland	Portland	Cholmondeley
Devonshire	Richmond	Coventry
Bolton	M. of Rockingham	Effingham
	A 2	Egremont

Egremont	Gainsborough	Paget
Ferrers	Chatham	Ponsonby
Fitzwilliam	Shelburne	Ravenfworth
Harcourt	Viscount	St. John
Jersey	Hereford	Fortescue
Spencer	Lords	Abergavenny
Derby	Beaulieu	Bishops of
Tankerville	Craven	Peterborough
Suffolk	King	St. Asaph.

Ordered, That the Lords be summoned for Tuesday the 8th of February next, to take into consideration a motion. That a Committee be appointed, consisting of Members of both Houses, possessing neither employment nor pension, to examine without delay into the public expenditure, and the mode of accounting for the same; more particularly into the manner of making all contracts, and at the same time to take into consideration what savings can be made consistent with public dignity, justice, and gratitude, by an abolition of old or new created offices, or reversion of offices, the duties of which have either ceased, or shall on enquiry prove inadequate to the fees or other emoluments arising therefrom, or by the reduction of such salaries or other allowances and profits as may appear to be unreasonable, that the same may be applied to lessen the present ruinous expenditure, and to enable us to carry on the present war against the House of Bourbon with that decision and vigour, which can alone result from national zeal, confidence, and unanimity.

THANKS of the *City* of LONDON.

Resolved unanimously, “ That this Court being thoroughly
 “ persuaded that the ruinous measures which have brought the
 “ landed and mercantile interest of this country into its present
 “ reduced and deplorable situation, could not have been pursued
 “ to their actual extremity, had it not been for the abuse of the
 “ present increased, enormous, and undue influence of the Crown,
 “ desire to return their sincere and grateful thanks to the Peers
 “ above-mentioned for having proposed and supported those mea-
 “ sures which tend so effectually to secure the constitution from
 “ greater dangers than those which arose from the powers which
 “ were formerly possessed or claimed by the Crown. And this
 “ Court declare their hearty approbation of the motion proposed
 “ to come on before their Lordship’s House on Tuesday the 8th
 “ day of February next; and assure their Lordships that they will,
 “ unremittingly, and at all times give, in their capacity, every
 “ species

“ species of assistance and constitutional support to a plan which
 “ promises a reform so necessary in our present alarming situation,
 “ and so salutary in all its future consequences.”

Ordered, That the said resolution be fairly transcribed and signed by the Town Clerk, and a copy delivered to each of their Lordships above-named by Mr. Remembrancer.

Ordered, That the said resolution, signed by the Towh Clerk, be printed in all the morning and evening papers.

R I X.

K E N N E T T, Mayor.

A Common-Council holden in the Chamber of the Guildhall of the City of London, on Thursday the 16th Day of December, 1779.

NOTICE being taken by a Member of this Court of two Motions lately made and debated in the House of Lords, and of another Motion lately proposed and intended to be debated in the said House on the 8th of February next, the copies of their Lordships minutes on those occasions were severally produced and read as above.

II.

PROCEEDINGS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH

On Wednesday December 15th, upon his giving Notice of his intention to bring in a bill, after the Christmas recess, for the *Retrenchment of Public Expences*, and for the better securing the *Independence of Parliament*.

AFTER making some observations upon the means which, he conceived, were used to prevent him from engaging the attention of the House to this interesting subject, he said,

A general sense prevails of the profusion with which all our affairs are carried on, and with it a general wish for some sort of reformation. That desire for reformation operates every where, except where it ought to operate most strongly—in this House. The proposition which has been lately made by a truly noble Duke, and those propositions which are this very day making, in the other House, by a noble Lord of great talents, industry, and eloquence, are, in my opinion, a reproach to us. To us who

claim the exclusive management of the public purse, all interference of the Lords, in our peculiar province, is a reproach. It may be something worse than a reproach:—for if the House of Lords should assume, or, if you please, should usurp, the performance of a duty of ours which we neglect, they will be supported in an usurpation that is necessary to the public. Privileges (even such privileges as ours) are lost by neglect, as well as by abuse: and whenever it becomes evident, that they are kept up as gratifications of pride and self-importance, instead of being employed as instruments of public good, their stability will be only equal to their value. Old parliamentary forms and privileges are no trifles. I very freely grant it. But the nation calls for something more substantial than the very best of them: and if form and duty are to be separated, they will prefer the duty without the form, to the form without the duty. If both Lords and Commons should conspire in a neglect of duty, other ways, still more irregular than the interference of the Lords may now appear, will be resorted to: for I conceive the nation *will*, some way or other, have its business done, or it is a nation no longer.

It is not only the sense and feeling of our country that calls upon us; the call of our enemies is still louder. This is the second year in which France is waging upon us the most dreadful of all wars—a *war of œconomy*. Monsieur Neckar has opened his second budget. In the Edict of November last, the King of France declares in the preamble, that he has brought his fixed and certain expences to an equilibrium with his receipt. In those fixed expences, he reckons *an annual sinking of debt*. For the additional services of the war, *he borrows only two millions*. He borrows not for perpetuity, but for *lives*; and *not a single tax* is levied on the subject to fund this loan. The whole is funded on *œconomy*, and on improvement of the public revenue.

This fair appearance, I allow, may have something at bottom, which is to be detracted from it. A large unfunded debt is probably left. Be it so. But what is *our* condition in respect of debts both funded and unfunded? What millions shall we not, must we not, borrow this year? What taxes are we to lay for funding these millions? Which of our taxes already granted, for these three years past, are not deficient? Not one, in my opinion. We must tax for what is to *come*; we must tax for what is *past*; or we shall be at a dead stand in all the operations of the war.

Are we to conceal from ourselves, that the omnipotence of œconomy alone has, from the rubbish, and wrecks, and fragments of the late war, already created a marine for France? Are we not informed, that in the disposition and array of the resources
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of that country, there is a reserve not yet brought forward, very little short of an annual two millions and an half, in the war taxes? Against this masked battery, whenever it shall be opened in the conflict of finance between the two nations, we have not a single work thrown up to cover us. We have nothing at all of the kind to oppose to it. The keeping this supply in reserve by France, is the work of œconomy,—of œconomy, in a court formerly the most prodigal, and in an administration of finance the most disorderly and corrupt. Absolute monarchies have been usually the seats of dissipation and profusion; republics, of order and good management. France appears to be improved. On our part—indeed we are not—we are not indeed, what we *have* been. And, in our present state, if we will not submit to be taught by an enemy, we must submit to be ruined by him.

On this subject of œconomy, on the other side of the House, they have not so much as dropped a single expression; they have not even thrown an oblique hint, which glances that way. A very ingenious gentleman of great consideration, connected with Ministry, has published a book, much of which is on the subject of finance; the fruit of the throws and labour-pangs of Ministry to bring forth taxes, in order to people the waste they have made in the public stock. This gentleman has ransacked every thing, every thing at home and abroad, antient and modern, to find taxes for that length of war, with the prospect of which he flatters his readers: but though he looks into every corner in the course of his inquisitive and learned research, and descends almost to thrust his nose into the urine tubs of Vespasian,—yet in all this straining and stretching for revenue, he never has once so much as thought of œconomy. It seems to him a thing wholly out of the question; though the Dutch practice, and Roman principle, to which he looks on other occasions, might have taught him that old true lesson, *Magnum vœtigal parsimonia*.

The noble Lord in the blue ribbon, has been so hard driven, that he has had recourse even to the impracticable in taxation. Last year he recommended the scheme of a worthy member of this House, conceived on the most laudable motives, though, in my opinion,—not well considered. The scheme was for raising our supplies within the year. The noble Lord recommended that scheme—declaring at the same time, that *he* did not know how to put it in practice—He, the Minister of Finance! It is however singular, that in all his begettings and adoptions, in all his schemes, practicable and impracticable, he has never once dreamt of œconomy.

In the House of Lords, the first proposition towards œconomy, by a noble Duke, was rejected by Ministers; and but for one

reason ; and that just the most whimsical in the world—*That it would lower the spirits of the people.* Very ingenious, indeed ! that the œconomical conduct of their affairs would lower the spirits of the people. Not having any of their Lordships delicate feelings in my plebeian constitution, I know not what to make of this sort of irritability of their fibres. Such nervous sensations are always whimsical and distempered. I know that hypochondriacal people swoon at perfumes, and are recreated by a stench. But I trust there is still enough of health and sound stuff in the habits of Englishmen to relish things according to their genuine nature ; that they will not take mortal offence at not being taxed to the quick ; and that they will rather be animated with fresh spirit under their burthens, when they know that not a shilling is laid upon them beyond the absolute necessity of the case.

What the Ministers, whose duty it is, and whose place furnishes them with the best means of doing that duty, refuse to do, let us attempt to do for them. Let us supply our defects of power by our fidelity and our diligence. It is true, that we shall labour under great difficulties from the weight of office ; and it is a weight that we must absolutely sink under, if we are not supported by the people at large. This House has so much sympathy with the feelings of its constituents, that any endeavour after reformation, which tends to weaken the influence of the Court, will be coldly received here, if it be not very generally and very warmly called for out of doors. But to offer is all that those out of power can do. If the people are not true to themselves, I am very sure it is not in us to save them.

I cannot help observing, that the whole of our grievances are owing to the fatal and overgrown influence of the Crown ; and that influence itself to our enormous prodigality. They move in a circle ; they become reciprocally cause and effect, and the aggregate product of both is swelled to such a degree, that not only our power as a state, but every vital energy, every active principle of our liberty will be overlaid by it. To this cause, I attribute that nearly general indifference to all public interests, which for some years has astonished every man of thought and reflection. Formerly the operation of the influence of the Crown only touched the higher orders of the state. It has now insinuated itself into every creek and cranny in the kingdom. There is scarce a family so hidden and lost in the obscurest recesses of the community, which does not feel that it has something to keep or to get, to hope or to fear, from the favour or displeasure of the Crown.

The worst of public prodigality is, that what is squandered is not simply lost. It is the source of much positive evil. Those
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who are negligent stewards of the public estate will neglect every thing else. It introduces a similar inaccuracy, a kindred slovenliness, a correspondent want of care, and a want of foresight into all the national management. What is worst of all, it soon surrounds a supine and inattentive Minister with the designing, confident, rapacious, and unprincipled men of all descriptions. They are a sort of animals, sagacious of their proper prey; and they soon drive away from their habitation all contrary natures. A prodigal Minister is not only not saving, but he cannot be either just or liberal. No revenue is large enough to provide both for the meritorious and undeserving; to provide for service which is, and which is not incurred.

I know that this influence is thought necessary for government. Possibly, in some degree, it may. But I declare, it is for the sake of government, for the sake of restoring to it that reverence which is its foundation, that I wish to restrain the exorbitance of its influence. Is not every one sensible how much that influence is raised? Is not every one sensible how much authority is sunk? The reason is perfectly evident. Government ought to have force enough for its functions; but it ought to have no more. It ought not to have force enough to support itself in the neglect, or the abuse of them. If it has, they must be, as they are, abused and neglected. Men will throw themselves on their power for a justification of their want of order, vigilance, foresight, and all the virtues, and all the qualifications of a statesman. The minister may exist, but the government is gone.

It is thus that you see the same men, in the same power, sitting undisturbed before you, though thirteen colonies have been lost. It is thus the marine of France and Spain has quietly grown and prospered under their eye, and been fostered by their neglect. It is thus that all hope of alliance in Europe is abandoned. It is thus that three of our West-India islands have been torn from us in a summer. It is thus the most important of all, Jamaica, has been neglected, and all enquiry into that neglect, this day, and in this House, stifled. It is thus Ireland has been brought into such a state of distraction, that no one dares even to discuss it; that the bill relating to it, though making great and perplexing changes, is such, that no one knows what to say, or what not to say upon it. Our parliamentary capacity is extinguished by the difficulty of our situation. The bill has been mumbled over with rapidity; and it passes in the silence of death. Had government any degree of strength, could this possibly have happened? Could the most antient prerogative of the crown with relation to the most essential object, the militia, have been annihilated with so much scorn as it has been, even at our doors?

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Could his Majesty have been degraded from the confidence of his people of Ireland in a manner so signal, and so disgraceful, that they who have trusted his predecessors in many particulars for ever, and in all, for two years, should have contracted their confidence in him to a poor stinted tenure of six months? Could the government of this country have been thus cast to the ground, and thus dashed to pieces in its fall, if the influence of a court was its natural and proper poise; if corruption was its soundness; and self-interest had the virtue to keep it erect and firm upon its base?

I will not fatigue your patience, I will not oppress your humiliation with further instances of the debility and contempt of your government. The inference I draw from the whole is this, that the present weakness of government is a disease of repletion. The vigour of the limbs is gone, because the stomach has been over-fed.

I have been clear on the nature of this disease, and on the specific remedy for a long time. I however kept back my thoughts, partly for reasons of personal want of importance, partly from my own disposition. I am not naturally an œconomist. I am besides cautious of experiment even to timidity—and I have been reproached for it. But times alter natures. Besides, I never, till lately, saw a temper in the least favourable to reformation. There is now a dawning of hope. I trusted that a Ministry might be formed, who would carry some such plan into effect with all the powers of government; and much is lost in not possessing those powers for this purpose. But the present favourable moment is not to be neglected; even under this disadvantage, great as it is, and as I feel it to be.

I have a plan, that I think will serve for a basis (it is no more) for public œconomy and reduction of influence. I have communicated it to a very few friends, whose approbation I am strengthened by; and I will communicate it to more, who will make it worthy of being brought into parliament. When it is thus matured, I mean to propose it to the consideration of the House, as soon after the Christmas recess as possible.

It will not be adviseable at this time to open all the particulars. Projectors see no difficulties; and critics see nothing else. When any new propositions are made, unattended by their explanations, their qualifications, and a full stating of their grounds, they are very liable to be decried; especially where men's interests are concerned in decrying them.

But I will venture to state the *end and object* I aim at, though not the means, I will state too the *limits* I fix to myself in what I shall propose to the House.

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I mean a regulation, substantial as far as it goes. It will give to the public service, two hundred thousand pounds a year. It will cut off a quantity of influence equal to the places of fifty members of parliament.

I rely more on a plan for removing the *means* of corruption, than upon any devices which may be used to prevent its *operation*, where these men are suffered to exist. Take away the means of influence and you render disqualifications unnecessary. Leave them and no disqualification can ever wholly prevent their operation on parliament.

My plan stands in the way of no other reformation: but, on the contrary, it tends exceedingly to forward all rational attempts towards that great end. It certainly cannot make a careless Minister an œconomist. But the best Minister will find the use of it; and it will be no small check on the worst. For its main purpose is to correct the present prodigal *constitution* of the civil executive government of this kingdom; and unless this be done, I am satisfied no Minister whatever can possibly introduce the best œconomy into the *administration* of it.

As to my *limits*; the first is found in the rules of justice. And therefore, I do not propose to touch what any private man holds by a legal tenure.

The second is in the rules of equity and mercy. Where offices may be suppressed, which form the whole maintenance of innocent people, it is hard (and hardship is a kind of injustice) that they who were decoyed into particular situations of life, by our fault, should be made the sacrifice of our penitence. I do not mean to starve such people, because we have been prodigal in our establishments. The removals will fall almost wholly on those who hold offices by a tenure, in which they are liable to be, and frequently are, removed for accommodating the arrangements of Administration; and surely the accommodation of the public, in a great case like this, is full as material a cause for their removal, as the convenience of any Administration, or the displeasure of any Minister.

The third sort of limits are to be found in the service of the State. No one employment really and substantially useful to the public, and which may not very well be otherwise supplied, is to be retrenched; or to be diminished in its lawful and accustomed emoluments. To cut off such service, or such reward, is what, I conceive, neither politic, nor rational in any sense.

The fourth of my limits, is, that the *fund* for the reward of service, or merit, is to be left of sufficient solidity for its probable purposes.

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The fifth, that the Crown shall be left an ample and liberal provision for personal satisfaction; and for as much of magnificence, as is suitable with the burthened state of this country; perhaps, some may think what I shall propose to leave, to be more than is decent.

I propose the idea with the properties, and with the qualifications I have now expressed. However presumptuous my attempt may appear, it is made with an humble and honest intention, and I will spare no pains to digest and ripen it. I trust it will give confidence to the people, and strength to government; that it will make our state of war vigorous; and our state of peace and repose really refreshing and recruiting.

Lord *John Cavendish* spoke after Mr. Burke as follows:

My honourable friend made me acquainted with his intended proposal before he gave notice of it in the House. I assured him I much approved of it, and wished it all possible success, but that I doubted whether Parliament had virtue enough at this time to bring so right a measure to perfection. I likewise told him, I was convinced that some plan of this kind was expected from us. The pressure of new taxes, and the decline of trade and of rents, has turned the thoughts of many persons towards this object; as a proof of what I say, I have a letter from a gentleman of fortune and character, to whom I am not personally known. His letter says, that from the present distresses and expected new burthens, many gentlemen are of opinion, that it becomes them to make some application to Parliament; that what has more particularly occurred to them is, to address Parliament to enquire into the public revenues, to retrench useless offices, and to give only proper salaries to those which are necessary. It may, perhaps, be supposed, that this idea, which corresponds so exactly with those of my honourable friend, was transmitted into the country by him or some person acquainted with his plan. To contradict any belief of that sort, I can assure the House, that the letter is dated the 29th of November; that is to say, before either I or any body else was acquainted with my honourable friend's intention; so that this concurrence does not arise from any previous concert, but it happens, because the national distresses suggest the same sentiments to every man's mind, and point out the same remedy.

Mr. *Dempster*. In my conscience I am persuaded, that the influence of the Crown is the true cause of the mischievous origin, the destructive progress, the absurd conduct, and the obstinate prosecution, without view or hope, of this cursed American war; which is now universally felt, and generally acknowledged, as itself the cause of all the other misfortunes of Great Britain, and

and principally of the present naval greatness of the House of Bourbon.

I am as heartily convinced, that the king's interest is as much affected by it as that of the subject. If it continues, and goes on as it has done, I vow to God, I do not think his Majesty will sit securely on his throne.

I am bound to remove this evil, as I cordially love my Sovereign, I think myself bound to it by my faith, by my allegiance, by the sacred oath I have taken to his Majesty. By that sacred bond and indispensable obligation, I am compelled to do every thing I can to secure the stability of his throne. This influence shakes it; it may subvert it; and nothing can be undertaken more worthy of a good subject, than to remove in time, this means of mischief and danger to the king.

I therefore thank my honourable friend for his intentions. They are worthy of his public spirit,—they would do honour to any man; and the business cannot be in more proper hands. I know his industry; and the rank he holds, as representative of the second city of the kingdom, makes him one of the most proper persons to introduce his design with authority.

Mr. Fox said, I cannot prevail on myself to be entirely silent upon such an occasion as this. I shall, however, trouble you with but a few words.

I have some knowledge of the plan of my honourable friend; and, in general, it has my hearty approbation. I thank him for the pains he has taken for the public service; I thank him as much for his endeavours to vindicate the honour of this House. I am just come from another place, where the first men in the kingdom, the first in abilities, the first in estimation, are now *libelling* this House. Every instance they give (and they give many and strong instances) of uncorrected abuse, with regard to public money, is a *libel* on this House; every argument they use for the reduction of prodigal expence (and their arguments are various and unanswerable) is a *libel* on this House. Every thing they state on the luxuriant growth of corrupt influence (and it never was half so flourishing) is a *libel* on this House.

But this House will be brought, by proper means, to wipe off all these imputations. The people for a long time have been slow and torpid. The noble Lord on the floor doubts whether they have virtue enough to go through with the plan of reformation, which my honourable friend has to propose. But the *virtue of necessity* will animate them at last; and through them will it animate and correct this House. The *virtue of necessity* (sure in its principle, and irresistible in its operation), is an effectual reformer. It awakens late; but it calls up many other virtues

virtues to its aid ; and their joint exertion will infallibly bear down the greatest force, and will infallibly dissipate the strongest combination that corrupt men have ever formed, or can ever form against them.

There is amongst us but one mind upon the subject. I hope and trust, that no man, or description of men, none who look to the public, none who wish the public ever to look up to them, will be so lost to all sense of their own reputation, and to all discernment of their own true interest, as at any time, upon any terms, or upon any pretences, to accept of the management of the state, without securing the execution of the plan of my honourable friend ; or of one similar to it.

If they should do otherwise ; let them come into office with what intentions they may, they will sink in character, faster than they can rise in power. That very influence, which they are prevailed upon to cherish as their means of strength, will become the source of their weakness. They will find, that the influence is not at their disposal. They will find every good design which they may form, traversed and frustrated. This influence will even appear in avowed opposition to them. It will be first employed to embarrass, and at length to destroy them. Whoever wishes for ability to serve their country, must get rid of that kind of instrument.

My honourable friend on the floor (Mr. Dempster) says well, that his duty and allegiance to the King are strong motives with him, for wishing success to this proposition. Certainly they must be so to every good subject. Can the King possibly enjoy the affection and confidence of his people, when his interest is wholly dissociated from theirs, and put upon a bottom perfectly separate ? It is but one and the same principle which cements friendship between man and man in society, and which promotes affection between King and subject : namely, that they share but one fortune ; that they flourish by the same prosperity, and are equal sufferers under the same distress—that the calamity of the people is the depression of the Prince. On any other terms, there can be no sympathy between men in any relation of life. Can any thing be more unseemly, more fit to separate his Majesty from his people, and to alienate his people from him, than to find, that when the landed estates are sunk one fifth in value ; when their rents remain unpaid ; when manufacturers languish, and trade expires ; and in that condition, burthen upon burthen is piled upon the fainting people ; when men of all ranks are obliged to retrench the most innocent luxuries, and even such as were rather grown by habit into a kind of decent convenience, and to draw themselves up into the limits of an austere and pinching œconomy, that

that just the beginning of that time should be chosen; that a period of such general distress should be snatched at as the lucky moment for complimenting the Crown with an addition of no less than 100,000*l.* a year. That the King should rise in splendour upon the very ruins of the country; and amidst its desolations should flourish with increased opulence amidst the cries of his afflicted subjects. It is something monstrous, something unnatural: an outrage to the sense; an insult on the sufferings of the nation.

I hope, therefore, for the sake of the public, for the sake of all public men, for the sake of the Crown, and for the sake of the King, that my honourable friend will add perseverance to the diligence he has already employed in his plan for lessening the public expences, and reducing the ruinous influence of the Crown, and that no time after the holidays will be lost in producing it. He has my hearty approbation, and will have my warmest support.

Mr. *Gilbert* expressed the warmest approbation of Mr. Burke's propositions, and said, that if he had not got the start of him, he proposed to do something of the same kind himself.

In the course of the day, Mr. *Barré* took an opportunity to express a very warm and manly indignation at the contemptuous manner in which the Minister had received a proposition of such importance, and to which all the rest of the House had paid uncommon attention. This gentleman, with very great personal civilities to Mr. Burke, expressed the strongest satisfaction that a business of that magnitude and consequence should be in such hands. Not having as yet received a communication of the particulars of the plan, he could not express approbation or disapprobation of those particulars; but, in general, he was rejoiced to hear of a plan of public œconomy; and he hoped such a plan would be large and comprehensive; so as not only to insure a just œconomy in that *expenditure* of public money, but that it would effectually provide a remedy for the abuses that exist, and are allowed on all hands to exist, in the present mode of *accounting* for the receipt and disbursements of public money.

III.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY MEETING AT YORK.

Thursday, 30th December, 1779.

AT a very numerous and most respectable Meeting of the Nobility, Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of this County, at the Assembly-Room, this Day, pursuant to an Advertisement for that Purpose,

pose, William Chaloner, Esq. of Guisbrough, was called to the Chair, from which he addressed the Company in a very polite Speech, thanking them for the Honour conferred upon him, and desiring their Candour and Indulgence.

The Rev. Mr. Wyvill opened the Business by informing the Company, that the Idea of calling the County together originated from a Set of private Gentlemen in the North Riding, totally divested of Party, in order to obviate an Insinuation that it sprung from the Marquis of Rockingham, a Nobleman, for whom tho' he had the highest Regard, he thought it necessary, on this Occasion, to hold out as by no Means a Mover in this Business, which actually sprung from neither him or any other Lord or Member of Parliament whatever. After stating the National Calamity, Debt, &c. he then moved that the following Petition, which he read twice, should be presented to the House of Commons.

The Petition was then read, and the Resolutions being severally proposed, were agreed to in the Manner specified below.

To the Honourable the COMMONS of GREAT BRITAIN, in Parliament assembled.

The Petition of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the County of York,

Sheweth,

THAT this Nation hath been engaged for several Years in a most expensive and unfortunate War; that many of our valuable Colonies, having actually declared themselves independent, have formed a strict Confederacy with France and Spain, the dangerous and inveterate Enemies of Great Britain; that the Consequence of these combined Misfortunes hath been a large Addition to the National Debt; a heavy Accumulation of Taxes; a rapid Decline of the Trade, Manufactures, and Land-Rents of the Kingdom.

Alarmed at the diminished Resources and growing Burthens of this Country, and convinced that rigid Frugality is now indispensibly necessary in every Department of the State, your Petitioners observe with Grief, that, notwithstanding the calamitous and impoverished Condition of the Nation, much public Money has been improvidently squandered, and that many Individuals enjoy sinecure Places, efficient Places with exorbitant Emoluments, and Pensions unmerited by public Service, to a large and still increasing Amount; whence the Crown has acquired a great and unconstitutional Influence, which, if not check'd, may soon prove fatal to the Liberties of this Country.

Your Petitioners conceiving that the true End of every legitimate Government is not the Emolument of *any Individual*, but the Welfare of the Community; and considering that, by the Constitution of this Realm, the National Purse is intrusted in a peculiar Manner to the Custody of this Honourable House, beg Leave farther to represent, that until effectual Measures be taken to redress the oppressive Grievances herein stated, the Grant of any additional Sum of Public Money, beyond

yond the Produce of the present Taxes, will be injurious to the Rents and Property of the People, and derogatory from the Honour and Dignity of Parliament.

Your Petitioners therefore, appealing to the Justice of this Honourable House, do most earnestly request that, before any new Burthens are laid upon this Country, effectual Measures may be taken by this House, to inquire into and correct the gross Abuses in the Expenditure of Public Money; to reduce all exorbitant Emoluments; to rescind and abolish all sinecure Places and unmerited Pensions; and to appropriate the Produce to the Necessities of the State, in such Manner as to the Wisdom of Parliament shall seem meet. And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

After which the following RESOLUTIONS were proposed, and unanimously agreed to, (except the second, to which there was one dissenting Voice) viz.

I. **RESOLVED**, That the Petition now read to this Meeting, addressed to the House of Commons, and requesting, that before any new Burthens be laid upon the Country, effectual Measures may be taken by that House, to enquire into and correct the gross Abuses in the Expenditure of Public Money; to reduce all exorbitant Emoluments; to rescind and abolish all sinecure Places and unmerited Pensions; and to appropriate the Produce to the Necessities of the State, is approved by this Meeting.

II. *Resolved*, That a Committee of Sixty-one Gentlemen be appointed to carry on the necessary Correspondence for effectually promoting the Object of the Petition, and to prepare a Plan of an Association on legal and constitutional Grounds to support that laudable Reform, and such other Measures as may conduce to restore the Freedom of Parliament, to be presented by the Chairman of the Committee to this Meeting, held by Adjournment, on Tuesday in Easter Week next ensuing.

III. *Resolved*, That a Meeting of Twenty-one Members be empowered to act, and that their Acts be considered as the Acts of the Committee.

IV. *Resolved*, That

Sir G. Armytage
Mr. Chaloner
Sir R. Hildyard
Mr. Morritt
Rev. Mr. Zouch
Sir J. Norcliffe
Mr. Strickland of
Boynton
Dean of Ripon
Mr. J. S. Smith
Mr. P. Milnes
Mr. Croft

Mr. Bell
Rev. Mr. Wyvill
Mr. Hill
Gen. Hale
Mr. Smyth of Heath
Rev. Mr. Mason,
Mr. Tooker
Mr. H. Duncombe
Mr. H. Thompson
Mr. Croft, jun.
Mr. Duncombe
Mr. Dalton

Mr. Strickland of
Beverley
Sir William Milner
Mr. Hawksworth
Mr. Withers
Rev. Mr. Wilkinson
Mr. Foljambe
Major Ferrand
Mr. Farrer
Mr. James Milnes
Mr. Edmunds
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Jackson

Mr. Jackson
 Mr. F. Dodsworth
 Mr. Cradock
 Mr. Carver
 Rev. Mr. Mitchell
 Sir Watts Horton
 Mr. C. St. Quintin
 Mr. Dring
 Rev. J. Robinson

Mr. P. Wentworth
 Mr. St. A. Ward
 Rev. Mr. Cayley
 Dean of York
 Rev. Mr. Bourn
 Rev. Mr. Comber
 Mr. Marriott
 Mr. G. Elfle
 Mr. Pool

Alderman Carr
 Mr. Barlow
 Mr. Thornton
 Rev. Mr. Dealtry, jun.
 Mr. F. Smyth
 Rev. Mr. Eyre
 Mr. Baynes, jun.
 Mr. Garforth
 Mr. Hildyard

be the Members composing the above Committee.

V. *Resolved*, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Lords and Members of the House of Commons present, who honoured this Petition with their Support; and that the Committee be directed to insert a Copy of this Resolution in the Papers, with the Names of those Lords and Members of the House of Commons annexed, viz.

Duke of Devonshire
 Duke of Rutland
 Marq. of Rockingham
 Earl of Scarbrough
 Earl of Effingham
 Earl Fitzwilliam
 Earl of Egremont
 Lord John Cavendish
 Lord Lumley

Sir James Lowther
 Sir George Savile
 Lord Rich. Cavendish
 Lord G. H. Cavendish
 C. Pelham
 W. Stanhope
 H. Goodricke
 S. Finch

H. Pierse
 W. Weddall
 E. Lascelles
 C. Turner
 Sir James Pennymann
 G. Sutton
 Sir Tho. Frankland
 T. Frankland

VI. *Resolved*, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to Sir George Savile.

VII. *Resolved*, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Rev. Mr. Wyvill.

VIII. *Resolved*, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to William Chaloner, Esq; Chairman.

IX. *Resolved*, That this Meeting do adjourn to Tuesday in Easter Week next ensuing.

W. CHALONER, Chairman of the Meeting

All Letters relative to the Meeting are desired to be addressed to the Committee at the York Tavern.

Besides the above Committee and the several Members who have already signed the above Petition, the following, among many other respectable Names, appear:

Sir George Strickland, Bart.
 Sir William St. Quintin, Bart.
 Sir George Cooke, Bart.
 Sir J. Pennington, Bart.
 Sir Thomas Gascoyne, Bart.
 Sir J. Legard, Bart.
 Sir John Ramsden, Bart.
 George Osbaldeston, Esq.
 Joseph Sykes, Esq.
 Charles Pool, Esq.

Francis Maude, Esq.
 William Sotheron Esq.
 Bryan Cooke, Esq.
 John Courtney, Esq.
 Henry Maister, Esq.
 Barnard Foord, Esq.
 Thomas Weddell, Esq.
 Dr. Hunter,
 Dr. Swainston.

T H E E N D.